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ABSTRACT

This transcript contains the text of three speeches on the problems of people with hearing impairments and the provision of library services to the hard of hearing. Howard Edward (Rocky) Stone, founder of Self-Help-For-Hearing-Impaired-People, Inc., describes his difficulties as a hearing impaired person, the growing number of Americans with hearing problems, the special needs of the deaf and the hard of hearing, the need for more research into loss of hearing, and the benefits of using an audioloop with hearing aids that contain telephone switches (T-switches). Andrea Wilson then discusses the special problems faced by hard of hearing people and ways in which librarians can help them overcome these problems. Background noise, difficulties in lipreading, and problems in telephone use are summarized. The special needs of hard of hearing librarians are also briefly mentioned. Finally, Karen Hopkins reviews five technological devices and developments for the hard of hearing, which should be considered for library purchase, including: (1) amplifying devices for headsets used in library listening and viewing stations; (2) the induction loop (audioloop) system discussed earlier by Rocky Stone; (3) closed-caption devices for television and captioned or interpreted video materials; (4) light devices, amplifiers, and other special devices for telephones; and (5) special emergency warning systems. (ESR)

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HELP! LIBRARIES AND THE HARD OF HEARING

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA JULY, 1982

We would like to welcome you to this program which is cosponsored by two of the divisions of ASCLA - the Library Services to the Deaf Section and Impaired Elderly Section - and one of the Sections of the Reference and Adult Services Division - Library Services to an Aging Population.

We have, we think, a very interesting and exciting program this afternoon which will involve a panel of persons giving presentations, a demonstration of the closed captioning equipment and some discussion of the program of the National Captioning Institute. Today, for the first time, the Library Services to the Deaf Section is moving its focus from the deaf population which libraries can serve to the much larger population of persons who have hearing impairments. As one of the signs of that, if you are a person who is hard of hearing and who wears a hearing aid with a telephone switch, (a T-switch) Mr. Stone has installed on this side in front an induction loop which you can use to hear the program, and we would be happy to have you move into that section. Several people are already sitting there.

There are several things which you have received on your chairs: a packet of material which you should take a look at this afternoon; a questionnaire from the National Captioning Institute that Karen O'Connor would very much like for you to fill out; and sometime during the afternoon you will be bothered by someone handing you a sheet of paper on a pad. We would like to get your name and mailing address so that we can inform you of other programs in the future.

The program this afternoon will be taped, and the cassettes will be available at a later date through the mail. It will be announced through the American Libraries magazine.

I remind you at this point that our 1983 program in Los Angeles will concern serving deaf and hearing impaired students in academic libraries, and will be sponsored by Library Services to the Deaf Section and ARCL.

We have two interpreters today, Nancy D'Court and Rosemarie LeCoffo.

At this point, I would like to introduce to you Rocky Stone - Howard Edward Stone - who was born in Cincinnati and has degrees from the University of Southern California, the School of Advanced International Studies at John Hopkins and graduate work at American University. He has done a lot of interesting things. In 25 years of federal service with the Central Intellegence Agency he has served in a number of countries. He has served as a consultant to Petrol Chemical Corporations in the Middle East. He has been a financial coordinator for St. Lukes Institute in Suitland, Maryland, and has served on a number of committees having to do with service to the handicapped population. He is the founder of Self-Help-For-Hearing-Impaired-People, Inc, a non-profit organization which was started in 1978-79. He is editor of the SHHH - a journal about hearing loss which you will find in your packet of materials. He has made numerous TV and radio appearances on behalf of the hard of hearing and services that the hard of hearing population needs. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce to you Rocky Stone.

ROCKY STONE

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Kathleen O. Mayo

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Thank you very much Dr. Wright. I mentioned to Kathy Mayo that my normal procedure is to look at the audience before deciding what I want to say. The thought that comes to mind almost immediately is the experience that one of our volunteers recently had after reading about Alice Hagemeyer's red book and services to the deaf in various libraries. This lady decided that she wanted to explore the libraries in her vicinity to determine what they actually contained - not only for deaf people but for those of us who call ourselves hard of hearing. Having been raised a hearing person, who lost her hearing, she is in the tradition of a very quiet, soft approach in the library. The only difficulty is, no longer being able to hear her voice, (which is very high and shrill) she decided that perhaps she should approach the librarian with a note. So, she wrote on the note "I can't hear, so you are going to have to write what ever you want to tell me on a piece of paper." She marched into the library (and I must say she is a very formidable appearing person). I don't know what the expression on her face was, but she thrust this note at the librarian who glanced at her and read it and reacted in a whole variety of ways - none of which was very satisfactory to my friend. It took a few takes and double takes to finally get to the point where communication was established. I think that the lady that I am talking about might have handled this differently, but the point is that we are invariably misunderstood in a variety of ways that are very human.

It is extremely important to us to communicate more effectively what some of our differences are so that those of you who hear can understand why we do things differently, and go beyond those differences to look at us as the people that we really are. There is a big difference between a deaf person and a hard of hearing person. As soon as you start to sign, you are in a different world. First of all you identify something which is basically an invisible condition. It is no longer invisible if you are signing. Secondly, you do have an effective mode of communication whereas an individual such as myself has to rely more on speech reading. Although imperfect, I am fairly gifted at it. I know there are many people in the world who do not have the same advantages that I have. So it is a different kind of thing.

I would like to tell you some of my own reactions to what I call deafness which is not a state but a condition of hard of hearing in terms of my function and compare that with some of your own experiences so that the next time you meet someone similar to me, you will understand that person a little better. The other aspect of my friend's experience, besides her initial entry at the desk was to find that the library contained almost no material of any consequence for her. She was upset about this, so I thought about bringing some of our usual brochures to this meeting. The more I thought about it, the more I was reminded of a very nice poem by Walt Whitman about libraries (and I am sure you all know it). There is a stanza in the poem which permits me to be in the position that Walt describes. "Shut not your doors to me, proud libraries, for that which was lacking from all your well-filled shelves, yet need most..." you find it on your chairs. You have in those envelopes ten copies of our thirteen issues of SHHH - which is a journal about hearing loss. You also have a summary of the White House Conference on Aging which we were commissioned to put on in the early 1980's. Put those in your libraries and share them with people who are hearing impaired and members of deaf families that do not sign. There are a large number of oral deaf people. They have an even more difficult time because of the route they have chosen to take. I am an oral deaf person but have no problems with signing at all because I think that you have to learn what ever type of communication is more effective and more comfortable to your own circumstances if you want to stay in the mainstream of your particular life.

When we were coming up this morning, Joan Kleinrock (who is our chapter coordinator, and is sitting right here in the third row) and I were sort of comparing experiences about how we feel. She is severely hearing impaired. We got into a discussion of identities. I can understand, for example, how a deaf identity, a deaf logo, a deaf culture is an important means of progression on the part of those individuals who were either born without the capability of hearing sound or lost their hearing very early in life so that they have attendant speech and language capability problems. I can understand how individuals who through attitudinal reasons have identified with that group, consider the whole concept of identity important and how that is so much a part of their life from the very beginning. The need to organize and eventually develop support structures and to make themselves assertive and independent in a way which is acceptable to them is very important. Hard of hearing people, on the other hand, are people who have usually lost their hearing after having it - in some cases for many, many years. I lost my hearing at the age of 19. I had my basic education. Although my voice deteriorated rapidly, actually I was able to speak reasonably well prior to my hearing loss. It took a good deal of effort to regain my voice and to regain some resonance or tonal quality in it which permits me to speak in a public forum without having too many difficulties in the process. Never the less, I was basically pretty much what I was and I never thought in terms of my deafness as becoming something of my identity. I had an identity established for myself. In my career, as I went on as an adult, deafness had very little to do with my identity.

There are a lot of people, however, who see this differently. I'm just giving you my own personal experience. But what I did, I think most hard of hearing people do, in the sense that I didn't talk about my hearing loss. I bore all of the burdens that that caused on my shoulders. And I kept it in here. And as Joan was pointing out in the car this morning, there is no question but what that has an impact on you. Why is it that you keep something like that inside you for so long, and let it eat away?

Someone said to me recently "Is there pain involved in hearing impairment?" "Maybe that's why people don't care too much about it - there is no pain." I said "No, there is no pain." "There is no pain like an arthritic, heart attack, or cancer ridden individual, no pain." There is just this deep, terrible, constant hurt. And it's a hurt that doen't show. It's a hurt that we keep inside of us. It's unhealthy to keep it inside, so we are beginning now to understand that we too have to articulate these feelings. Not so much to put a burden of guilt or an added burden of initiative on our hearing friends or our deaf brothers and sisters. Not to compete with them, but to realize that we have to get these feelings out - we have to articulate them, we have to understand ourselves what they're doing to us. I can't describe to you my feelings of pain - no, hurt (I say pain advisedly) sitting around a Christmas table or Thanksgiving table with the children and grandchildren all gabbering away and me not being able to hear what's going on. I happen to come from a family structure which is unusually loving and caring. The result is that at any given time my son might turn to me and say "Dad, what we are talking about is such-and-such." and he will summarize it. A few minutes later my daughter will turn to me and say "Daddy, we were just discussing this." And a few minutes later my wife will do the same thing. Depending on how closely I was attending those conversations, or on what my capability was to filter out the various noise in that particular environment, and concentrate on the lips enough to get what they were saying, I may have not needed that, but it is essentially an act of love. It is an act of respect on the part of those closest to me - for me - telling me that they want to keep me in their mainstream of life. You can't beat that. That's a pretty important thing. I don't know how many of you are from families where you have a hearing impaired person and you have never

done anything like that. If so, try it, you will be surprized what the response might be.

There are any number of things that individuals who try to hide something as significant as a hearing loss go through. I was asked in the line for lunch today "Why is it that we deny that?" "Why is it that there is such a stigma attached to hearing impairment?" I replied that we had a brilliant man named Aristotle in our history of philosophical development who ordained that if you could not hear, you could not reason. From that, Aristotle has been able to implant, very solidly in the depths of our culture in Western Civilization (of which he is a pillar of philosophic thought), a stigma which remains in 1982. If you are deaf, if you can't hear well, maybe you're a little dumb, too. What Aristotle was not aware of was that the Greek language, however beautiful, was hardly the only mode of expression. Nor is English the only mode. What Aristotle was saying was that if you are born without the capability of hearing sound, you have no ability to learn a language, and therby express in that language the same way that we do in the Greek civilization the things that we Greeks are most interested in. Aristotle was right, but he was very shortsighted. He didn't realize that the Greeks had developed only one form of expression of reason. People are finding today more and more the importance of even things like non-verbal communication. The spoken word, regardless of what languagge it is, constitutes a small percentage of what we call good communication.

The fact that we do things differently because we have whatever kind of a handicap, is the thing that puts many, many people off. We are always uncomfortable with difference. Difference is often said to be the beginning of prejudice. And it is. But I think that the more we begin to understand about each other's situations, the better we are able to communicate effectively. I am naive enough to believe that most of the people in the world really do want to do the right thing - that they really do want to relate effectively with me, just as I want to relate effectively with them. For that reason, I feel that it's extremely important for me to permit that to happen by telling them from the very beginning of our association that I am profoundly deaf. I sometimes say deaf and I sometimes say hard of hearing depending on the person I am speaking to or the circumstances. There are some circumstances where if you say deaf it means something immediately, where if you say hard of hearing it's much more vague. They don't understand it. I have 110 -decibels-plus loss in both ears. That's pretty deaf. This hearing aid permits me to hear sound. It does not give me sentences. I get a word here and there. I am blind in my right eye - but that's no problem except the fear of loosing my left, because that's really what I depend on for communication. And I have very severe tennitus (which is ringing in the ears) which causes me more problems than the other two things. Yet most people who look at me immediately come to the conclusion that my only difficulty is that I am overweight. That's a problem too. But that's sort of endemic.

Deafness is becoming endemic. The reason it's becoming endemic is that we are systematically destroying our hearing with sound. If you look at that last journal in your pack, you'll find it concentrates pretty heavily on noise in our environment - with good reason. When the last three succeeding freshman classes in college are discerned as having lower thresholds of hearing than their predecesors, we have young people who are in serious trouble. As bad as drugs are, as bad as alcohol is, if you've lost your hearing by the time you're in college, you're even in worse shape in terms of the kind of life that you have ahead of you. Many of our young people have the hearing of a 60-year-old person already. On the other end of the spectrum, we have a prognosis for extended life. A larger population of hearing impaired people

goes with that. As we age - we don't always know the reasons for it - we are increasingly of the opinion that some of this is more genetic than presbyacusis which is, for want of any better term, loss of hearing caused by the aging process. But if you extrapolate from figures of the large number of older people that we predict for, say the year 2000, and take the same figure for deafness that exisis in that group today (but add to that the knowledge that, through the noise environment that we live in, it's going to get worse - and in fact is every year) you can see the enormity of the problem of hearing loss and hard of hearing people - people who are difficult to deal with - who you're going to have to handle both professionally and on a personal basis.

It is rare that you'll meet anyone who does not know someone who has a hearing impairment. It is the single most pervasive physical handicap in the United States and it is getting worse - much worse. We have a serious problem here. Like the blind and low vision who number slightly over 11 million, with a small percentage at the end of the specturm who are legally blind and a large number of people who are of low vision, in the hearing impaired field you have a small number - significant but small in terms of numbers (under 2 million) who are considered or who consider themselves to be deaf, and over 14 million people who are hard of hearing. The interesting thing about this, however, is that the blind, despite all of their infighting among the various organizations, have been very successful in projecting to the government, and to the public at large, a unified image sufficient to reflect their numbers in this society. We have never done that - even among our deaf communities, which have too much struggle among themselves particularly over things like manual and oral communication). We have a small group of people at the end of the spectrum who have been working, organizing, trying to develop an awareness of deafness. But it did not include that very large number of people that the blind did include in their counterpart organizations.

For the first time, in the last few years, we seem to be developing an awareness that the word hearing impaired is not synonymous with deaf. It means deaf and hard of hearing. It means that we have to think in terms of people who do not sign. If they sign, wonderful. It may even simplify your job if you happen to know sign language. But you are dealing with all kinds of people who come to your desk and won't tell you that they are hard of hearing. They may try to find out something from you and you get into all kinds of emotional struggles and reactions simply because there is no visible awareness of the problem. We are trying to break that attitude down. We are trying to get rid of - to the extent we can - the historic stigma of deafness. By we I don't mean SHHH. I mean all of us - the deaf community and those of us who are now becoming more active in the field of hard of hearing people. Anything I say about the deaf communities is meant to be constructive. I am trying to illuminate an area of larger numbers of people that have been neglected. But I do not want to do that at the expense of that smaller number of very severely impaired persons who need everything that they get.

We are going to work well with deaf communities where ever they will let us. In some cases that is not possible because of a personality conflict or the fact that many hard of hearing people feel that we are in between two worlds. The hearing world doesn't understand us. Our deaf brothers and sisters don't understand us. They think that you just put a hearing aid on and everything if OK. Well, it isn't. Hearing aids, as you probably know, are 20 years behind the state of the art. Furthermore, there are only 3-1/2 million hearing aids in existence. About 12 million people in this country could probably benefit from some form of amplification. They obviously don't have hearing aids. You might say "Why don't they?" "It's their fault." That

doesn't help very much. If we applied that dimension to you, you would be in trouble all the time. So would I. It's like the employer who decides, based on his perception of your limitation (in this case deafness) what you can do and what you can't do. Very, very poor way of going about it.

I do things differently than the average person. I get a lot done. I was very fortunate in the CIA (regardless of what you think of the organization) that the people there related to me on the basis of my ability rather than on the basis of my disability. That is precisely what we are trying to do with people around the American community today - to bring to them an awareness that there are special problems, even within that broad area of deafness, that need not a special commitment of money from individuals, not even much more than common courtesy - just an awareness and appreciation for the difference, an understanding that we are human beings that respond to the same kinds of stimuli that you respond to and that we expect from you the kind of treatment which, hopefully, we give to you.

That is a very important point. The reason I bring that one up is that you may have a tendency, as so many of us do, to harbor information that you are hard of hearing, to simply bear the problem alone, and do the best you can (and mind you this is what most of us do). This is starting to change a little bit but most of us just do the best we can. Joan was pointing out in the car this morning that inevitably that has some effect on you.

As I began to examine that, I found, deep inside me, areas of resentment, areas of anger, areas of specific anger against specific people that I probably would be unwilling to admit under normal circumstances. It is only by looking inward that you realize that you cannot indure this kind of treatment for long without changing your attitudes about the people around you. We are going to have to recognize that those of us who have the problem must be as considerate of you as we expect you to be of us. It is very difficult if, over a long period of time, you've got, grinding away inside of you, a bitterness that develops that you don't tell anybody about and that nobody sees except in those flashes of hostility that occur in every family before the door slams and you walk out of the room, or they walk out of the room.

These are the kinds of things that happen all the time. There is another real problem, I think. People say that hearing impairment, deafness, is not life-threatening. I wonder about that. My wife works as a chaplain at the National Institute of Health. Her job is to deal only with people who are dying. It doesn't make any difference what your age is when you are dying, whether it's 15 or 85, the key words are rejection and loneliness. I can think of no greater way to reach the state of loneliness than to loose your hearing. It's the fastest road to that particular area that I know of. I can think of no greater way to feel rejected than to develop a state of loneliness through the loss of hearing and to feel that all of those around you don't understand. You begin to feel sorry for yourself. You begin to turn inward and live alone. I think that when a person perceives himself or herself to be in a state of loneliness or in a state of rejection, they give up, they let go of life. Now we know (medical science) that the connection of mental health and physical health - particularly in terms of the rate of recovery after an operation - has a great deal to do with the onset of illness.

What I am suggesting is that when you lose your hearing, and become lonely, and feel rejected, you don't try hard. You open yourself up to vulnerability. You become vulnerable to other more life-threatening deseases such as cancer, leukmia or heart desease. I am interested in future research to try to determine what some

of the connections between these two situations might be. Research into even the cause of deafness is very limited in America. If you take a look at the National Institute of Health, which constitutes 11 research organizations under one umbrella, you will find that there is one called the National Eye Institute which has a budget of 17.4 million dollars. Today, most people dealing with research of the eye will acknowledge that we have made major breakthroughs in our study of vision. The research ratio of 4 for vision to 1 for hearing is absurd, but nobody would do anything about it. The way that research ratio was established was through the grass-roots organizations at community levels of blind people and their friends. They have made blindness an issue of national concern. We are working toward that end. We solicit your support in making as many people aware of that as possible. Until we reach the point where deafness becomes an issue of national concern, we will not be able to demand the kind of resources for research that blindness now does. Until we do that, despite pockets of private research enterprise, we are not going to have any greater awareness in 5 or 6 years about things like the hereditary aspect of nerve deafness than we do today.

I lost my hearing in the military when I was 19. We checked into the hereditary aspect of that to the extent possible. No real evidence. I have a son who was going to be named Kevin. When he was born, the poor thing looked exactly like me. In fact, if you saw us in the shower today, we're even formed the same way. So we named the young man not Kevin, but Howard Edward, Jr. Isn't that awful? I've never liked the name Howard. But anyway, he has the name Howard Edward, Jr. Would you believe it, he has a sensory nural nerve impairment. Now it's clear to me that our family has in it somewhere a tendency toward nerve deafness. But I can't get any medical explanation for that. Nobody knows anything about it. There are many, many areas of deafness that require great research efforts which will not be made until those of us with the problem try to establish a large enough constituency to do something about it.

It is very, very difficult in our society to demand attention without working through the system effectively, and that means with numbers. That means widespread representation. Again, we are beginning to do that. SHHH has members in 50 states. We have approximately 40 groups meeting regularly. The significance of those groups, in addition to the numbers that they represent, is that they bring hope to each other. By banding together such as people in deaf communities have done, and by being able to share their common situation, by deriving strength and support from each other, new worlds and new vistas are being opened. Everywhere I go to a chapter meeting, people look around and they say "I never knew there were so many hard of hearing people." They had never seen them before. Unlike members of a deaf community, who have a certain amount of pride in what has happened and how they are trying to cope with it, the hard of hearing person continues to try to avoid acceptance and continues to try to avoid speaking about this. Eventually, I think, we will be able to change this.

Lives have already been changed in the last two years. In addition to providing social and psychological supports around the country, we've been able to educate our members and their families about the availability of technology which could help them today, not tomorrow. There are many things that must be done for tomorrow, but there are many things that exist today that many of us can actually use and be helped with. This audioloop that I've set up here is engineered to my small residual hearing and low frequency. It permits me to hear words and sentences that I cannot hear with a hearing aid. It permits me to go to meetings like this, to answer questions, to listen all day long, if I have to, without that enormous strain of focusing

either on the person who is speaking or the sign interpreter (or, in the case where we have an oral interpreter, the oral interpreter). When I use the audioloop, it reduces that strain by 80 or 90%. The result is that, if I use that loop all day, I still have some energy left in the evening. Without that loop, I don't have much energy.

This is something that I am just newly associated with and familiar with. You can imagine what I felt like working in a pressure cooker like the CIA for 12 hours a day or more. What do you think my family found when I got home? On the one hand, there was Rocky Stone, the great achiever in the CIA. He was deaf, but he went right up to the top of the agency in a few years. No real problems. Great, boy, he overcame his deafness. Bologna! You don't overcome your deafness. What you do is handle it in such a way that is pleasing to the people who work in the environment that you happen to find yourself in, and you make out all right. But your family sees a much different person. Just like a limp washrag. You close the door on the outer world and you sit down in a chair, and you say "Get me a beer!" or what ever. "Honey, Ted did this..." "Don't bother me with Ted..." "What do you think of so-and-so..." "Just let me sit." Do that for a few years and if you're still married, you're lucky. And I'm lucky. But you know it took me a long time to understand that. And I had to retire before I was fully conscious of the kind of wringer I put my own family through - before I was fully conscious that a little communication from me could not only help me but ease their lives - help them. They actually wanted to help me.

These are things that we have to work our way through and understand and then try to bring to other people so that generation after generation doesn't have to go through the same kind of agonizing, personal experiences. These are things that I think , through sharing in group meetings at chapter levels all over the United States, can help us live better, feel better, behave better. And it is working.

One of the most startling things I find everywhere I go though, is that you can put a loop like this down and the people who have the problem will say "Well, it won't help me." I'll say "How do you know, have you used it?" "No, but it won't help." I say, "Well there is very little energy envolved. All you have to do is move your T-Switch into position." "That's all you have to do." "Would you try it?" "Yea, but it won't help." Pretty soon they're hearing everything and they're amazed. Absolutely amazed. And you think, well they will probably take some action in their community to make sure their church is equipped with this equipment, some theatres equipped with it, that the local library has one room which has some kind of a sound system for meeting purposes that hearing impaired persons could utilize. You don't see it. It takes a long time to change attitudes. It's coming slowly.

Recently I was in Chicago and some lady told me how she heard for the first time when she went to see "Children of a Lesser God" because they had the infrared sound system traveling with this marvelous play. She was really ecstatic. Everybody was around, smiling, nice expressions, good experience. I said "What happened when the play left town?" She said "Well they took the infrared system with it." I said "Have you been to the theatre since?" "No." I said "Are you going to wait until "Children of a Lesser God" comes back to town with the infrared system?" "Why don't you do something about it?" "Why don't you go to the theatre manager and tell him what an experience you have had and that there are thousands more in your community that could benefit from this." Instead of putting the social guilt pressure on him to put it in his theatre, tell him that he'll increase his sales by 6% (which is a fairly generalized figure for a metropolitan area in the United States) if he puts that system in there and provides for people who can't hear very well and who don't

always wear a hearing aid, who don't always sign. It's happening. Slowly, slowly, these systems are being put in.

Two years ago we didn't have many theatres, movie houses, churches, or anything else with the kind of sound systems that we have been talking about. Today they number in the hundreds. Churches all over the country, theatres, movie houses are increasingly being equipped. Courthouses should be equipped. You read recently, I hope, that Barbara Churick, who is a good friend of mine, became the first person to serve on a jury using an oral interpreter. Well, I speech read well, and I can use oral interpreters. But with this loop, I can also hear so I am just waiting for the next time I get a jury summons. Instead of saying, as I have said in the past, "I can't serve because I'm deaf," I'll say, "You bet your life I can serve." And I'm going to serve! And I want that courtroom equipped with an audioloop which is very inexpensive. I think I might make as good a juror as some of the other people who have been serving as jurors. I think I can exercise my responsibility as well as they can. I am going to hear differently.

That's really what It's all about. The mere fact that we have to do things differently should not scare you. I believe that you will find in dealing with people increasingly in the library that they will want to know what you have with reference to hard of hearing people - what facilities there are in your library (such as rooms equipped with sound systems) whereby when you have very interesting speeches and programs they might participate in them. And you're going to see an increasing demand, if you wish, for understanding and appreciation of their situation - which you can give them with a minimum amount of effort on your part.

I hope that bringing the world of hearing and the world of the deaf together will help us join hands and really make a difference for the future. It's happening in my own range of vision, my own experiences and I think it's going to happen and touch all of you in the not too distant future. I thank you for giving me the opportunity to be with you today. If there are any questions that any of you have, we can either ask them through this audioloop system or you can come up afterwards

Thank you, Mr. Stone. I am going to ask that you hold your questions until the end of the panel and then we will have a few moments for questions using a special audio loop microphone if any of you want to speak to Mr. Stone.

The second speaker is Andrea Wilson who will be speaking to us on special problems faced by hard of hearing people. Andrea is a graduate of Adelphi University and has her MLS from Queen's College. Since 1973 she has been working in Florida. She has worked in the Ft. Lauderdale area. She has worked in that system in a number of positions - in acquisitions, public services, reference and is now the Audio Visual Librarian for the system where she is responsible for film selection and acquisition, moving now into the acquisition and selection and utilization of video formats of various kinds. I am happy to introduce Andrea Wilson.

ANDREA WILSON

Welcome to the world of the "inbetweenies." Hearing loss is the nations #1 disability. Over 14 million Americans are affected. The New York League for the Hard of Hearing projects that one out of five people you know have or will develop a hearing loss in their life time. The reasons for hearing impairment are numerous, and the range of disability varies from mild to total deafness.

I would like to call your attention today to the numerous problems the hard of hearing patrons and librarians face - especially in the library. These problems deal with noise, expectations of hearing aids, light, telephone, lip reading, auditory training, sign language, psychological attitudes and so forth.

In spite of the large number of people affected by hearing impairments, I have positive news. There are numerous ways to help the hard of hearing patrons in providing library services. It is important to remember that, like the deaf, the hearing impaired must daily face the realization that their problems are those of communication rather than overcoming lack of movement. Unlike the deaf, the hearing impaired can usually rely on marvelous aids of various sorts to assist in overcoming a great deal of their problems.

What are the problems of hard of hearing patrons? One is noise. It may be difficult to understand the voice of a librarian around a busy circulation desk area. A good example is the reference desk located near a busy checkout desk. Unlike people with normal hearing who can contend with background noise very well, the hearing impaired must devote 100% concentration on one speaker and find that competing background noises interfere heavily with their comprehension. If your library is set up in such a way that the reference desk/information desk is right near the circulation desk, you need to consider what you can do about that. The staff should make every effort to step aside to a quieter place in the library so as to be able to speak louder, slower, or do whatever is necessary to convey information.

Both hearing and hearing impaired people often have erroneous expectations of the value of hearing aids. Many people think that aids will restore total hearing and clarity. In other words, aids do make all sounds louder, but many still encounter difficulty perceiving certain sounds. Library staff should be cognizent of the fact that many who can benefit from the use of aids do not wear them for various reasons. Possible reasons include the high cost, vanity, unawareness of loss, embarressment, the inability to benefit from the use, and the problems adjusting to hearing aids in general. Librarians should be aware also that the hearing impaired patron wearing a hearing aid should not be expected to hear as well as a hearing

person.

Lip reading is another area requiring awareness by librarians and related staff. Those who are born with a hearing loss and others who suffer a loss at an early age can, if given sufficient training, lip read very well. Librarians should be astute enough so that when a hard of hearing patron is studying their face with deep intent it is not a stare, but an effort to follow one's lips. It is often difficult for the hearing impaired person to lip read men with beards or mustaches that are bushy and cover part of the lips. If a librarian finds that he or she is not being understood, perhaps someone else could substitute. Only as a last resort should information be written down. Those who aren't sure how to speak to a hearing impaired person sometimes may adulterate their speech. This isn't necessary. Proper enunciation, a moderate tone and pace are adequate.

While many have received auditory training, this skill is an adjunct to lip reading skills. Librarians should never turn their back, walk to-and-fro and inadvertently cover their face with their hands. There are many individuals who do not lip read or are learning how to lip read. If a librarian sees that his or her attempts to communicate are unsuccessful, he or she should ask if the information should be repeated.

Lighting can pose difficulties. One should never stand in front of a window or bright light as the light source shines in the hearing impaired patron's face and often makes it almost impossible to lip read the speaker.

These are all very obvious problems. But there are subtle psychological ones that need to be addressed as well. An example is denial of a problem. Many people, when confronted with a loss, generally do not accept it readily or easily. Still others may be gradually losing their hearing and do not realize what they are missing. Others, aware of their loss, are angry and resentful. Social workers, psychologists, and psychiatrists know that people pass through various stages before accepting and coping with the disease or problem. Such patrons need empathy and a helpful approach.

Other subtle problems of a general nature are different. The hearing impaired have telephone difficulties. Certain letter combinations and numbers pose problems on the phone. Those hard of hearing patrons that do not use an amplified phone may sometimes strain to understand the other party. There are certain pay phones that are very difficult for the hard of hearing to use even if they do use their hearing aids. Should a patron encounter this problem, it would be a very nice gesture to assist the patron who needs to make an important local call from the library. An amplified pay phone should always be available as well.

Most speech patterns of the hearing impaired vary. Those who have acquired a recent loss usually retain very good speech. While others, due to lack of training, motivation, delay in receiving help and so forth do not speak as well. Idioms, timely expressions, and local jargon can pose a problem if the hearing impaired has missed learning these through conversation. PA systems and films may be loud enough, but not clear enough for the hearing impaired person to fully comprehend them.

I have covered the gamut of problems that the hearing impaired patron can encounter in libraries. But what does all of this signify in terms of providing good library services? Librarians should be sensitive and aware of all of these problems that the hard of hearing may encounter. Staff can be sensitized to speak louder,

slower, not stand in front of a bright window, face the patron while speaking, and not obstruct the view of their mouth. Libraries can be checked for good visual clues. Is there adequate signage, correct signage? Simple, concise, helpful, typed instructions can be prepared to explain the resources the library offers. Staff assigned to the information desk can play an active role in assisting the hard of hearing patron in better using the library facilities.

What about the problems of hard of hearing librarians? It is very helpful to alert others to your problem. Otherwise, you may miss out on some vital information whether it is intended or grape-vine variety. It is a good idea to have other staff preface phone conversations with their name as hard of hearing librarians - as well as others with similar problems - cannot always discern different voices on the telephone. The hearing impaired librarian may need to ask others to take notes at meetings.

Actually the problems of the hearing impaired librarian are the same as those of other hearing impaired professionals who serve the public and interact with large numbers of staff within an organization. The hard of hearing librarian can set very positive examples by not only alerting others to their problem, but also by indicating what is most helpful in reducing and overcoming problem situations. Most importantly, the hearing impaired librarian should not be too hard on himself or herself. It is helpful to remember that even people with normal hearing have trouble hearing under some conditions.

The library is a very unique social institution. It is free, available, and quiet (at least most of the time). The library is a place where there is quiet noise. A hearing impaired patron can sit amidst many people and not feel left out, unlike restaurants, houses of worship, schools, theatres, etc. One can fullfil a quest for knowledge, relax, or be entertained. The hearing impaired patron can get much needed information about hearing loss and derive helpful information about hearing aids and available agency services. The libraries should cooperate with agencies to dissiminate this badly needed information. Also this pamphlet material, available through agencies such as Alexander Graham Bell and the New York League of the Hard of Hearing, are available at very nominal fees.

Library professionals should know that many elderly hearing impaired and other hard of hearing people withdraw from social situations because they cannot adjust to their loss. The library can open the door to a new world.

I would like to share a very touching story with you. In Broward County - a county of over 1 million residents (over 20% are 65 and over) - an older avid library patron who is hearing impaired told me that the library changed his whole life. On the bulletin board of his local branch he learned of the elder hostel program whereby older adults embark on brief educational courses of study at colleges and universities all over the country - usually held during the summer months. This gentleman learned about Gallaudet College. After a week spent there learning all about hearing impairements and how to cope with them, he came away realizing he does not have to withdraw from society. He has learned how to best cope with his problem. Today, he is a very active leader at the local SSSH chapter in Broward County.

With renewed insight into the problems and needs of the haring impaired patrons, the library should reasses its values to the 14 million + hard of hearing - this large, inbetween group with the invisible handicap.

We've heard several references this afternoon to the fact that for hard of hearing people there are a number of technological devices and developments. In fact, as Rocky Stone said, the devices and developments that we actually have are probably 20 years behind the state of the art in many areas. Nevertheless there are a number of these and this afternoon Karen Hopkins, who is manager of Training and Media Services at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at the Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, New York. In this capacity, Karen is responsible for the hardware and non-print materials that are used to support instruction at NTID as well as the circulation of over 300 telecommunication devices at RIT. She is, incidentally, also our chairman-elect (and, after today's meeting, will become chairman) of the Library Services To The Deaf Section. She is also - for those of you who are members of the Library Services To The Deaf Section - the editor and promotor of the reviews that come out twice a year. I know she won't say it (maybe she will again but I'll say it anyway) if you would like to be a reviewer, boy could we use help! A number of publishers are sending new publications to Karen for review. Many of us who work in libraries have found this review service to be a very helpful service. Karen will be speaking on accessibility aids for serving hard of hearing and hearing impaired patrons and staff. Thank you.

KAREN HOPKINS

Thank you. There are many, many devices that are used by the hearing impaired in getting through their daily lives. Everything from bed vibrators to awaken them in the morning to flashing lights that are attached to their doorbells, to sound-sensitive lights that may be set up in the room where their child sleeps. For you in the library, I would like to talk about five devices - most of which are inxpensive - that you, as librarians, should consider installing.

The first one is the induction loop system which Rocky Stone has shown you today. This system is very inexpensive - in most cases can be installed for under $100. Your meeting room is the most likely place to put it. It can be portable or it can be permanently installed. As Rocky has shown you, he takes his with him so that it can be set up wherever he goes. The four components that you need are, first of all, a multiconductor wire - telephone wire. It can be of any length. You want to set up a small place, then get a small wire. You want to install it in an entire room, then cover the entire boundary. The second thing you need with this system is an amplifier which is down underneath the table here. The third item is the microphone - that which most of you would be using in a meeting room anyway. And fourthly, you need your hard of hearing person who has a T or TM on his hearing aid. Not very difficult to install. Anyone who has set up a public address system can install an induction loop system for you. If you're showing films, slides, videotapes, in your meeting room then the sound source can be set up to be that film chain, that slide tape, or that video play back unit.

There are other systems that can be set up in a meeting room. One of them being an infrared system that Rocky mentioned as being used with the Children Of A Lesser God play. The one drawback that I've found with the infrared system is that it is fine with fluorescent lights (such as what is in this room and in most of your meeting rooms), but incandescent light can interfere with an infrared system. Also we had an experience where we were showing a captioned film to a group of students using a 16mm projector that had a Zenon light. The Zenon light completely shut down the infrared system. So the induction loop system that you have in here is better. There is one problem, though, with the induction loop system. Don't set it up next to your telephone. It receives telephone conversations beautifully.

Another system is the Phonic Ear which has a cord going around the individual's neck and a receiver. The sound is then transmitted from the transmitter worn by the speaker directly to the receiver. The one thing with that, though, is that it's much more conspicuous then the switching of a hearing aid to a T-mode. So in situations where we have found that people do not want to admit that they are wearing a hearing aid, they're more willing to sit in an area where they know there is an induction loop and casually switch to that T-mode. Nobody notices it but they certainly notice if they're putting a transmitter-receiver around their neck.

A second item that all librarians should consider is amplifiers in the headsets in the listening and viewing stations in your libraries. In ordering a headset from a vendor, make sure that you tell him you want it to handle above-normal loads. Telephonics is one company that sells headsets that will handle above-normal loads. They cost $35 - $40 - just about what your other headsets will cost. But it provides the hard of hearing individual with the opportunity to use your record collection, your foreign language tapes, everything that you have in your audio cassette and phonograph record collection that your are offering to the hearing person, the hard of hearing individual can now enjoy because of the amplification in the headset in your viewing and listening stations.

If you have a television viewing area I would strongly recommend that you attach a Sears DeCoder to one of the television sets. This will provide an opportunity for many individuals to see the closed-caption system. I am not going to say much about that because Karen Connor will be demonstrating it to you in just a few minutes.

If you do not have a standard television viewing area, but have an area where individuals are viewing video cassettes, consider ordering captioned or interpreted video materials - preferably captioned. On the back table you will see a brochure that is labled "Adaptive Media Exchange." This lists several companies - CRM/McGraw Hill, Salenger, Coronet - who are now marketing captioned video materials - you can buy them directly from that source. In addition, Gallaudet College's distribution center markets a variety of captioned video tapes as well as the Special Materials Project - Handicapped Learner Materials Distribution Center at Indiana University. This will provide your hearing impaired individuals with an opportunity to view the captioned video materials right in your library.

Another item is the telephone. As Andrea has indicated, if you have a hard of hearing reference librarian, then be considerate - find out what his or her needs are. If he needs an amplifier on the telephone at the reference desk, have one installed. You know that traditionally the telephone bells at the reference desk are often times set down a little bit lower. If you have several reference desk phones in the same area it can be very confusing to a hard of hearing individual to know which one is ringing at which time. You can set up a light device so that when that phone rings, a light will flash, then the person will know to answer it.

Pay phones in the entrance area can be set up in two ways - one with an amplification device, another with a TDD attachment. The TDD attachment is simply the standard pay phone set up with a coupler and a TTY. This does cost about $800 but many Lion's Club organizations have been willing to purchase TTYs to be set up in this way because they can serve the entire community. You would be surprized at the number of people who might find their way into your library because they have a TTY that they can use independent of any other source - they don't have

to go through a high line - they can make their own calls via that telecommunication device.

Still staying on the telephone, if your have a reference desk where you are answering reference questions via telephone, put a TDD there. And again, in the back, you will find a whole packet of information about various telecommunication devices. Everything from Ancoms to Superphones to Porta-Printer-Pluses to the old standby TTY's. The prices of TTY's/TDD's vary from $400 to $1200 - depending on what you're looking for. Consider whether you need hard copy. Do you need to read that conversation, or can you simply let it come across an electronic line and respond to it? Do you have an area large enough to have the TTY's set up there or do you have to have a portable device that will fit into the reference librarian's desk? Do you want to have a device that automatically answers when that phone rings so that you have a dedicated line to TTY calls/TDD calls and, everytime that phone rings, this message says "such-an-such a public library, someone will be with you in a moment, GA." Those are all things to consider and all of the options are pointed out in this packet.

The last item is something that each of you should consider if you are employing a hard of hearing, (a hearing impaired) individual. That is special emergency warning systems. If a large number of hearing impaired individuals are employed in a library, you may want to consider a strobe system where a strobe light flashes when the alarm system goes off. But more and more people are trying to find less expensive devices so that when you have one hearing impaired staff member, you have a device for that staff member and it is relatively inexpensive to buy. I know of two such devices. One is a vibrating pager which we are trying out right now. It's OK for the male members of our staff to wear a vibrating pager on his belt, but it's a little bit difficult for the female members to always remember to have this pager attached. What it does - the minute the alarm system goes off this thing starts vibrating and tells you to get out of the building. It is OK in that when you're working in an area where there are no strobe lights, it is something that will warn you when there is a problem. But I understand that there is a better system that is currently being marketed. I haven't seen it yet and maybe some of you have. It's a portable smoke and fire alarm system with strobe light attachment. It's about this big, battery operated, and, supposedly, inexpensive. I haven't been able to get a price quote on it. It comes from Mill Industries in LaGrange, Illinois. If this is indeed the case, this will probably be the system instead of the vibrating pager, but we will see in the months ahead.

These are the five things that I think each of you should consider as you strive to serve, more effectively, the hard of hearing, hearing impaired public. This is a clientele whom we have served very poorly in the past and, as it has been pointed out, it is a very large and ever-growing clientele. Let's do what we can to offer libraries as a source of fun and information to a group whom we have not done very well by in the past. Thank you.